

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 IO-13 AID-05 OMB-01
TRSE-00 /105 W
-----096997 191037Z /23

R 171835Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2077
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMCONSUL ZAGREB

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BELGRADE 5631

E.O 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, EG, LY, YO
SUBJECT: YUGOSLAV POSITION ON RECENT EGYPTIAN-LIBYAN FLAREUP

1. SUMMARY. FONSEC MINIC'S COMMENT TO SENATOR MCGOVERN
AUGUST 10 THAT "EGYPT HAS COMMITTED ARMED AGRESSION
AGAINST LIBYA" IS AS SUCCINCT A STATEMENT OF OFFICIAL GOY
FEELING ON THE SUBJECT AS WE HAVE SEEN. IT CLEARLY
REMOVED WHOS LITTLE DOUBT MAY HAVE LINGERED AS TO WHOM THE
FEDERAL EXDSUTIVE COUNCIL WAS REFERRING IN A FORMAL,
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PUPISHED STATEMENT OF JULY 25 THAT "GREAT RESPONSIBILITY
FALLS ON THOSE WHO INITIATED (THE FIGHTING)". NONETHELESS,
THE YUGOSLAV PRESS HAS MADE A VALIANT (IF UNSUCCESSFUL)
EFFORT TO PRESERVE AT LEAST THE PRETENSE OF IMPARTIALITY
ONE MIGHT EXPECT FROM A NON-ALIGNED LEADER THAT "IN
PRINCIPLE" REFRAINS FROM PARTISAN INVOLVEMENT IN DISPUTES
BETWEEN NON-ALIGNED MEMBERS. END SUMMARY.

2. YUGOSLAV MEDIA COVERAGE OF BRIEF EGYPTIAN-LIBYAN HOSTILITIES AND THEIR AFTERMATH HAS BEEN BOTH EXTENSIVE AND PROMINENTLY FEATURED. WHILE EDITORIAL COMMENT CASTIGATING EITHER DISPUTANT BY NAME HAS BEEN CONSPICUOUSLY LACKING, EXTENSIVE QUOTATION FROM OFFICIAL LIBYAN SOURCES, BALANCED ONLY SLIGHTLY BY INCLUSION OF EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT STATEMENTS, HAS BETRAYED DEFINITE YUGOSLAV BIAS. IN ADDITION, PRESS HAS PREDICTABLY DWELLED ON THEMES SUCH AS MAJOR POWERS ARMING AND MANIPULATING THE CONFLICTING PARTIES (WITH EMPHASIS ON US-EGYPTIAN CONNECTION), PERSISTENT EFFORTS OF ILL-DEFINED "EXTERNAL FORCES" TO UNDERMINE UNITY OF THE ARAB STATES AND THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT, AND CONSTANT THREAT THAT INTER-ARAB CONFLICT POSES FOR THE PALESTINIAN CAUSE.

3. BENEATH FACADE OF OFFICIAL IMPARTIALITY THERE IS CLEAR EVIDENCE THAT FROM VERY OUTBREAK OF THE FIGHTING THE GOY HAS PLACED BLAME SQUARELY ON EGYPT, TO WIT:

- THE SEDANESE AMBASSADOR HERE IS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN TOLD BY A HIGH RANKING FSFA OFFICIAL WITHIN THE LAST TWO WEEKS THAT WHEN DEPUTY FONSEC MOJSOV SPOKE WITH SADAT IN CAIRO APRIL 29 THE LATTER THREATENED HE WOULD "TEACH QADHAFI A LESSON" IF QADHAFI PERSISTED IN HOSTILE ACTIVITIES TOWARD EGYPT AND THE SUDAN;

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- THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, WHICH SELDOM COMMENTS PUBLICLY ON CONFLICTS BETWEEN "FREINDLY", NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES, POINTEDLY STATED JULY 25 THAT "GREAT RESPONSIBILITY FALLS ON THOSE WHO INITIATED (THE FIGHTING)". FEC'S STATES THEN THAT A TIME WHEN YUGOSLAV PRESS WAS QUOTING EXTENSIVELY AND ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY FROM OFFICIAL LIBYAN SOURCES;

- CALLED IN BY FSFA ASSTSEC BERNADIC IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING OUTBREAK OF FIGHTING, EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR GHALEB REPORTS HE RECEIVED "BALANCED" APPEAL FOR CEASE-FIRE BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES BOTH OF WHICH YUGOSLAVIA CONSIDERED "FREINDS". BERNARDIC WENT ON, HOWEVER, TO TELL GHALEB "YOU (EGYPTIANS) YOURSELVES" HAVE SAID YOU ARE FIGHTING ON LIBYAN TERRITORY AND SADAT SAID HE WOULD TEACH QADHAFI A LESSON (THUS CLEARLY IMPLYING EGYPTIAN CULPABILITY);
- SUDANESE AMBASSADOR HERE IS FURTHER REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN TOLD BY FSFA OFFICIAL WITHIN LAST TWO WEEKS

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AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMCONSUL ZAGREB

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BELGRADE 5631

THAT GOY HAS "THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS"
(PRESUMABLY YUGOSLAV EMBASSY IN CAIRO) COMMUNICATED
TO EGYPT ITS CONSIDERED OPINION THAT EGYPTIAN
STRIKES ON LIBYA WERE FAR GREATER THAN WHAT LIBYA
HAD DONE MIGHT JUSTIFY;

- IN MIDST OF BROAD RANGING TALKS WITH SENATOR
MCGOVERN IN BELGRADE AUGUST 10, FONSEC MINIC FLATLY
STATED (WITHOUT ELABORATION) THAT "EGYPT HAS
COMMITTED ARMED AGRESSION AGAINST LIBYA".

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4. GHALEB RECENTLY TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT HE HAS NOT RPT NOT
INFORMED SADAT EITHER OF FEC STATEMENT (WHICH GHALEB HAD
NO DOUBT WAS AIMED AT EGYPT) OR OF GENERALLY BIASED

COVERAGE OF ENTIRE EPISODE BY YUGOSLAV MEDIA. HE HAS REFRAINED FROM DOING SO, HE SAID, OUT OF CONCERN THAT IT WOULD "VERY MUCH UPSET SADAT" AND MIGHT WELL HAVE SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS ON EGYPTIAN-YUGOSLAV BILATERAL RELATIONS. GHAELEB'S CAPSULE ANALYSIS OF YUGOSLAV POSITION ON EGYPTIAN-LIBYAN CONFLICT IS THAT "WHEN MONEY IS OPPOSED TO POLITICAL INTERESTS, MONEY ALWAYS WINS".

5. COMMENT: WE AGREE WITH GHAELEB THAT YUGOSLAVIA'S GROWING, MULTI-FACETED (PARTICULARLY ECONOMIC) RELATIONSHIP WITH LIBYA HAS FOR SOME TIME RATHER DEFINITELY DETERMINED ITS AT LEAST PRIVATE POSITION ON THE SMOULDERING EGYPTIAN-LIBYAN, SADAT-QADHAFI DISPUTE. BUT A PERCEIVED WARMING OF EGYPTIAN-US TIES, COUPLED WITH EGYPT'S FAILURE TO DATE TO RECONCILE WITH THE SOVIETS AND FEAR OF EGYPTIAN SLIPPAGE ON DOMESTIC IDEOLOGICAL AND PALESTINIAN ISSUES, ARE IMPORTANT FACTORS, WE BELIEVE, UNDERLYING CURRENT RELATIVELY COOL STATE OF YUGOSLAV-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS AND, HENCE, GOY'S PRO-LIBYAN PARTISANSHIP.
EAGLEBURGER

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